

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Leisure and Community Policy Development and Review Panel

Date **3 September 2014**

Report of: **Director of Community**

Subject: **OPEN SPACES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME PLAY AREAS
AND OTHER (NON-SPORT) RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

SUMMARY

In November 2013 the Executive approved an improvement programme for the Councils play areas and other (non-sports) recreational facilities using developer's contributions collected since the 1980's.

This report reviews progress against the plan and proposes that a full review of the process for developing the future programme be conducted and that a new programme from April 2015 and beyond be presented to the March 2015 meeting of the Panel.

RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to give their comments on the updated play areas improvement programme to be reported to the Executive.

INTRODUCTION

1. In November 2013, the Executive approved a five year improvement programme for the Council's outdoor sports facilities, play space and other recreational facilities utilising developer contributions. Since first introduced in 2011-12, seven play areas have been refurbished at a total cost of £368,000.
2. This report reviews progress against the play space and other recreational element of this plan and presents a proposed means of preparing the revised plan in future years.
3. The plan in relation to outdoor sports facilities is reported separately.
4. The projects will be funded from remaining section 106 contributions where available or from contributions from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), subject to collection of funds and successful bids to the Executive.

OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Progress on 2013 - 2014 Projects.

5. The play areas at Swanwick Lane and Abshot Road have been refurbished.

Progress on 2014 -2015 Projects

6. The play area refurbishment at Eastern Parade has been removed from the programme as this area is in good condition and therefore no works are required.
7. The toilet provision at Lodge Road allotments has been removed from the programme as the relevant allotment association has been unable to fund their contribution to this project.
8. Consultation on the play area refurbishment at King George V playing fields commenced in July with a view to implementing the improvements in Spring 2015
9. Further consultation is underway with residents in relation to the improvements at Hammond Road and Birchen Road, to determine whether any improvements are required and if so the nature of this provision. If works are required then they will be carried out in spring 2015.
10. The environmental improvements at Park Lane which form part of the Park Lane Vision will be implemented in 2015/16 when the play area, skate park and outdoor gym equipment improvements are due to be installed in the first phase of delivering the vision. £50,000 has been allocated to this project, although with the development of the vision, this would not be sufficient to meet the full aspirations at this site.
11. Phase 2 of the vision includes the multi-use sports area at an estimated cost of £500,000. This is programmed for 2016/17 subject to external funding being available to supplement any existing section 106 funding that may be committed to this scheme.

12. Phase 2 will also include the wider landscaping such as the new entrance features, an arboretum, new park furniture and new planting and fencing and is estimated to cost £100,000. Currently this is unfunded but could be funded from the available developers contributions.

FUTURE PROGRAMME

13. When previously reported in September 2013, there were no further improvements identified for play areas, although three sets of WC's were identified for improvement at allotment sites.
14. In previous years decisions as to which play areas were to be refurbished have been taken without a clear set of criteria to help to determine priorities. As a result the available funding has not always been directed to the areas of greatest need.
15. The responsibility for preparing and delivering the play area improvement programme will transfer from the Streetscene division to the Leisure and Community division following consideration of this report by the Panel. Following this, the opportunity will be taken to review the process and consider whether play areas require:
 - refurbishment,
 - improvement through the addition or replacement of individual pieces of equipment,
 - new play areas provided,
 - to be removed.
16. The process will also take into account whether inclusive play equipment is provided as part of each improvement programme and look for opportunities to provide dedicated areas for inclusive play opportunities.
17. In reviewing the process, criteria will be established to ascertain the category into which each play area falls. The criteria will include, but not be limited to:
 - The condition of existing play equipment.
 - Whether there are any missing items of equipment.
 - The condition of the play areas surface.
 - The condition / presence of ancillary features such as fencing, gates and seats.
18. In assessing whether new play areas are required, consideration will be given to:
 - Whether there is a demand from local residents.
 - The presence of existing play areas in the immediate vicinity.
 - The demographics of the area in question.
19. As the existing programme for play area provision does not extend beyond 2014/15 and following the transfer of responsibilities, it is not proposed to present a programme for 2015/16 and beyond at this time. Instead a full review and audit of all existing provision and request for additional provision will be undertaken and the findings presented to the March 2015 meeting of the Leisure and Community Panel.

20. It is suggested that prior to the meeting in March 2015, members of the Leisure and Community panel be invited to attend a half day visit to play areas in the Borough so that officers can explain how they have carried out the review and categorised / ranked play areas for future improvement.
21. Currently the programme includes for the refurbishment of three sets of WC's at allotment sites with a total value of £10,000. No progress has been made on these projects where the intention was for the provision to be made in partnership with the allotment associations. It is suggested that these be removed from the programme and that the available funding be transferred to Streetscene to fund any future improvements to allotment sites.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

22. The available section 106 developer contributions for each of the CATs area for the play areas and other recreational facilities improvement programme is set out in the following table:

| Area | Available Budget | Uncommitted |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Western Wards | £394,206 | £299,206 |
| Fareham | £338,400 | £243,400 |
| Crofton | £43,410 | £43,410 |
| Portchester | £33,267 | £33,267 |
| Titchfield | £864 | £864 |
| Borough Wide | £57,759 | £57,759 |
| Total | £867,906 | £677,906 |

RISK ASSESSMENT

23. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report. However, the future funding of play area improvements is subject to the replenishment of section 106 funding which may not be available.

CONCLUSION

24. There is an opportunity to review, develop and improve the play space and other recreational facilities improvement programme and to focus this primarily on play areas. A full review of existing provision and new demand will be undertaken and the results of this, along with a new programme, reported to the Leisure and Community Panel in March 2015.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Gareth Satherley, Leisure Development Manager (Ext 4476)

New Open Spaces Improvement Programme

| 2014-15 Improvement Programme | | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Project | Cats Area | Budget Required | Budget Available | Funding Required | Comment |
| Play area refurbishments at Birchen Road | Western Wards | £50,000 | £50,000 | £0 | |
| Play area refurbishments at king George V | Western Wards | £75,000 | £75,000 | £0 | |
| Hammond Road Play area | Fareham | £45,000 | £45,000 | £0 | |
| Totals | | £162,500 | £162,500 | £0 | |

| 2015-16 Improvement Programme | | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Project | Cats Area | Budget Required | Budget Available | Funding Required | Comment |
| Environmental Improvements at Park Lane | Fareham | £50,000 | £50,000 | £0 | |
| Totals | | £50,000 | £50,000 | £0 | |